

MAY 2012 to JULY 2012

(Volume 41)





MAY 2012 (Volume 41)



With the Olympics well underway at the time of writing this I have had plenty of opportunity to think where Mr.Citizen fits into the scheme of things in this country. Trying to get advance tickets was a fiasco with tickets being shown 'as available' on line suddenly being shown as 'not available' when trying to book them. With thousands of VIP (?) tickets going to corporate ventures and foreign dignitaries (sic) we were allowed to visit the Olympic Park from outside and like kids with noses pressed against the Christmas toy shop windows we were 'allowed' to look from the observation area at the Park progress. Footpaths were closed and we had the total chaos of 'Olympic Lane closures with a whopping £130.00 fine if you strayed into them. We were refused entry to Greenwich Park to climb the hill to see the view from the Planetarium...it was for ticket-holders only - the whole park taken over for the games. Tough luck for any non-ticketed tourists. The ticket-holders were actually channelled behind crush barriers with local traders and Greenwich market being totally off limits to the massive crowds...A surge of unrest rapidly got the barriers removed. The final cock-up seems to be yesterday when after major entreaties to avoid London 'unless your journey was really necessary' caused major problems for theatres (empty) and shops (void of customers). A hurried message was issued to enjoy London shops and theatres..."too late" ...I hear you cry. The games are fantastic as was the opening ceremony. What riles us is the exclusion of the public. It shouldn't be elitist...it shouldn't be commercial. We are definitely NOT anti-Olympic, we are anti the exclusion of the vast majority of the population. Local shops were not allowed to open. A-boards were removed, leafleting forbidden and Westfield Shopping centre had its parking cancelled and for the last two days only Olympic ticket holders were allowed in. Let us see if the expected vast influx of money generated by the games actually materialises in the long term. Take into account use of the facilities in legacy and hopefully we will not be paying for the games in generations to come. I think it was only last year when we actually repaid the war debt owed to the USA. I am not a killjoy...these books demonstrate my love for London and the UK but I really feel that it is about time we should live within our means as a nation and start thinking about producing real commodities maybe returning to quality products that we were renowned for. Exporting mass goods is not a viable concept where China and India have manpower (and knowhow). We were a small country that was the envy of the world and we are now debt-ridden and seem to be an irresistible magnet to the scum from other countries. Why do they travel through many countries to settle here...simply because we are known throughout the world as a soft touch. Actual numbers are not even known. Anyone working in the real London can see the change. I love diversity of our population. It is what makes us unique but we are not attracting people who want to work and make a home here...many just want an easy life without putting anything back. This is the difference now. I will not allow this to be termed as racist feelings. I, with my background, would be hypocritical to be racist. No...I hate scroungers and there is no excuse for this. After working a long hard day I sometimes go up to town and there on the steps on the Southbank are the inevitable scruffy young people with a mangy dog mumbling "spare some change". Lynn has to stop me giving them a mouthful. Just further along are pubs with signs outside "glass collectors wanted". No, it is easier and more rewarding to scrounge money. Along the river-side are great buskers giving entertainment in many forms in return for coins...I have no problem with that...I did warn you in earlier books that I am rapidly becoming a grumpy old man.....The Olympic Torch was carried through the country and went right past our door...Yes we enjoyed and participated in that event.... The Shard opened as did the Cable car crossing The Thames.

On a personal not all family are well. Tammy, Ben and family are still dog-obsessed but we must admit they are lovely dogs...just one would have been plenty though...Larnie is doing well at school and is a young lady now..growing up rapidly. We do not see the boys often but they are also becoming independent too. DP is still very active in sailing and Beau is also taking sailing lessons now. Peachie and Beau are beautiful and really great kids. We saw them a few days ago when we took the train to Ipswich for a quick trip to see them all. Mum is frail but all there still and we have arranged carers to call twice a day to supplement our calls and visits. She comes at least once a week for a meal here and relaxes in the garden (weather permitting)

Lynn has retired now...she finished at the JC just prior to our South America holiday and is enjoying a well-deserved rest after a life-time of work - often in jobs she did not like. Thanks Lynny..it is appreciated and I love having you home when I get back..I am not the easiest guy but I loves yer...

August 4th 2012 (married 48 years ago last week)



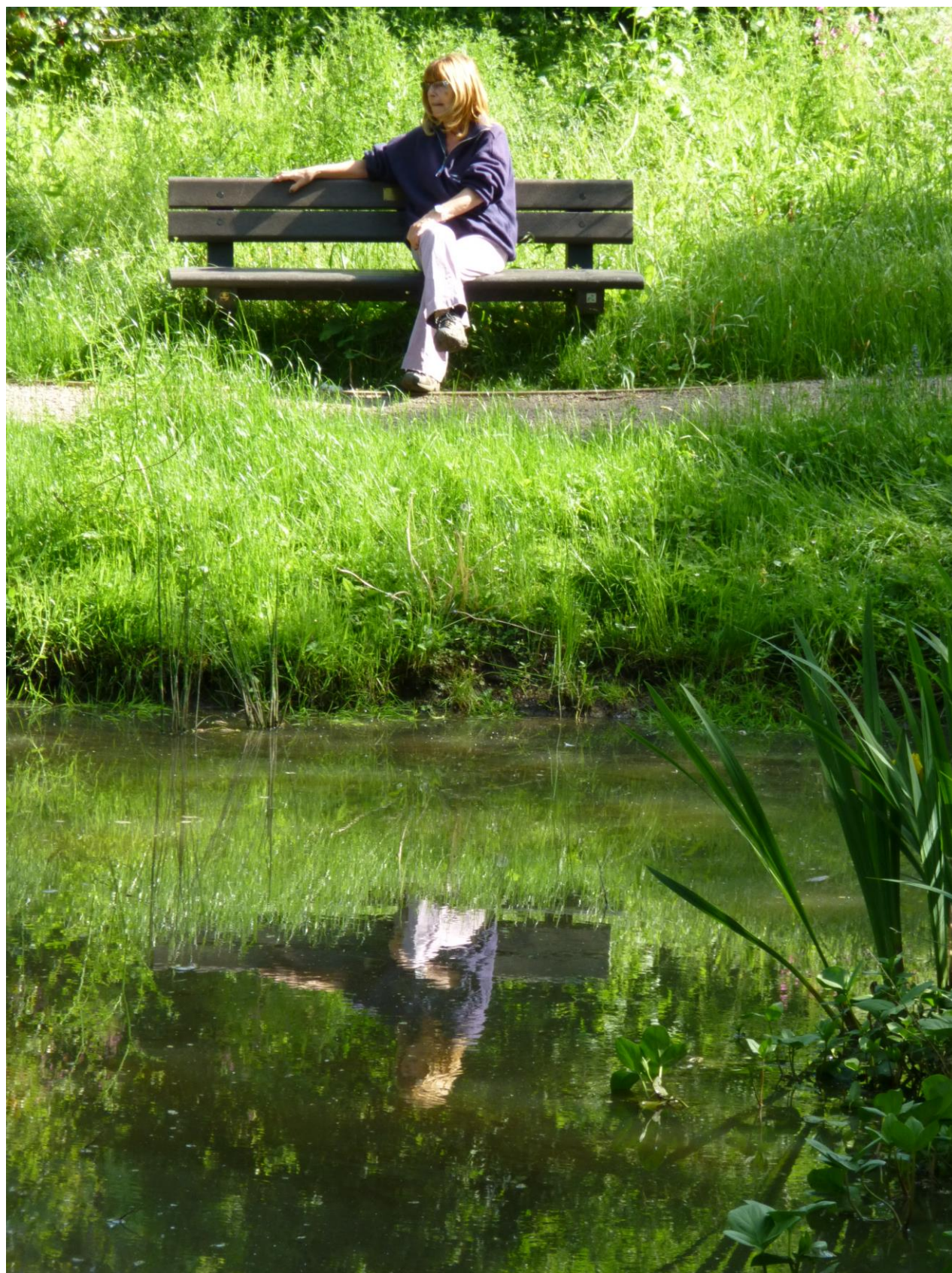
From the hole in the ground (see above) in March 2009 to this icon in 2012

I guess The Shard will be an icon but it still seems sort of strange set so close to the surrounding Guys Hospital. When you look at it from Borough High Street it seems to have the scale all wrong. These monoliths are great in some locations..say in Dockland or in the City but when they are set within small existing buildings, especially older property it seems incongruous.

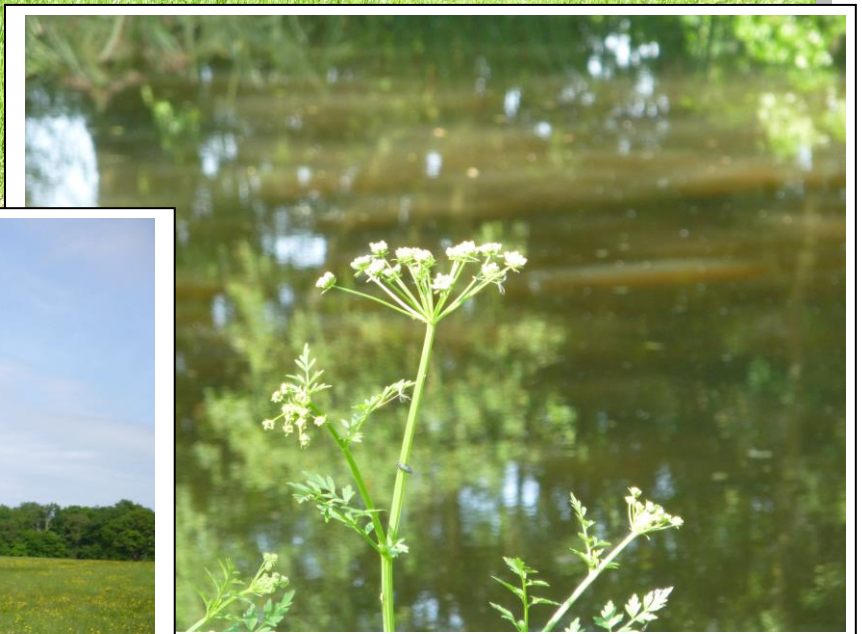


Look carefully...The three angels in this smaller shot have a much fairer halo distribution





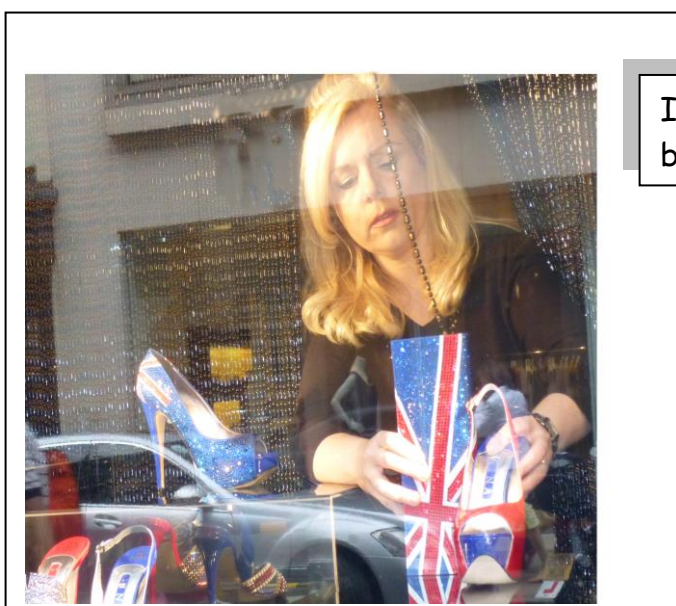
In a hidden corner of Trent Park is a secret garden that has been 'brought back to life' by a volunteer ground force and it is often a destination for Lynn and myself on our daily walks





Regent Street
from the bus

The Diamond Jubilee was a great reason for celebration in London prior to The Olympics



In Bond Street -expensive 'toot'
being put on display



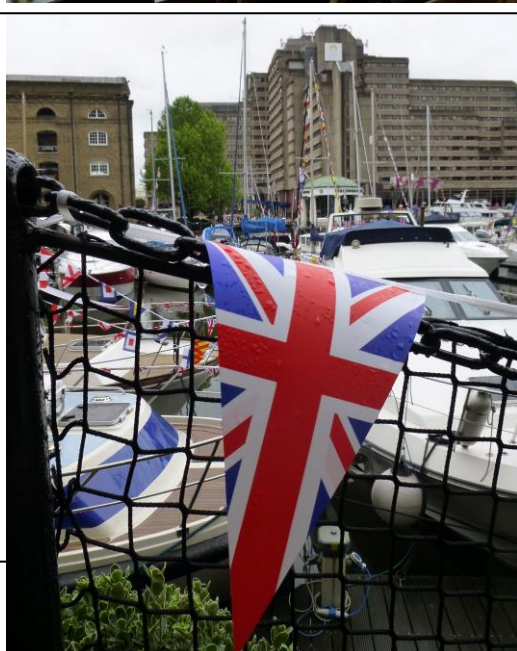
DP came to London on The Melissa and we proudly waved as Tower Bridge was raised as she sailed through. (He is standing here near the stern)...



St Katherine's Dock looked fantastic with all the red, white and blue flags and bunting on the boats



I can't remember London looking so colourful...there was such a feeling of fun everywhere





Back to Grovelands....our swans have just given birth to cygnets and they are fiercely protective



We love the park.....it is wonderful to have such a great facility right on our doorstep



Walter putting the finishing touches to his speciality-the 'Tiny Trifle'

Vivy got right into the Jubilee spirit with her wonderful celebration tea....







A few days in Lynton was, as always, a real treat and we were lucky with the weather. This year has been one of the wettest on record and the terrible weather seemed to follow on directly from a hosepipe ban that had been imposed due to unexpected water table deficiencies and emptying reservoirs...needless to say this ban was revoked with sarcastic comments in all the media.



The path down to Heddon's Mouth..

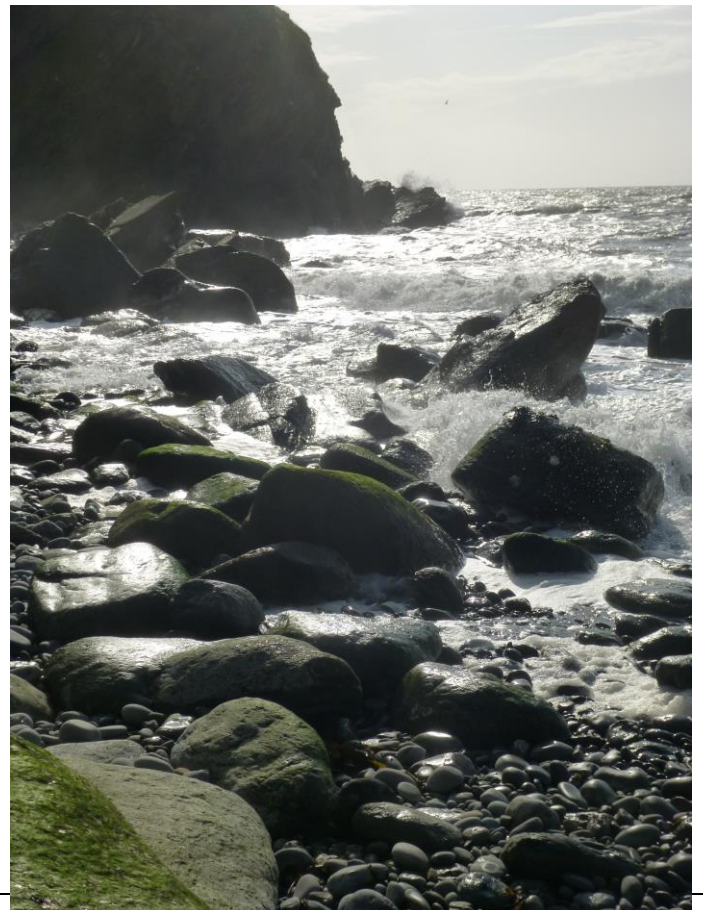


This new camera has the panoramic feature and here I am able to show the whole wonderful view





You can just lose yourself staring endlessly into the crashing waves. The smell and sounds are like nothing else and is very humbling









There is something about breakfast that brings a smile to your face...maybe it's hunger...



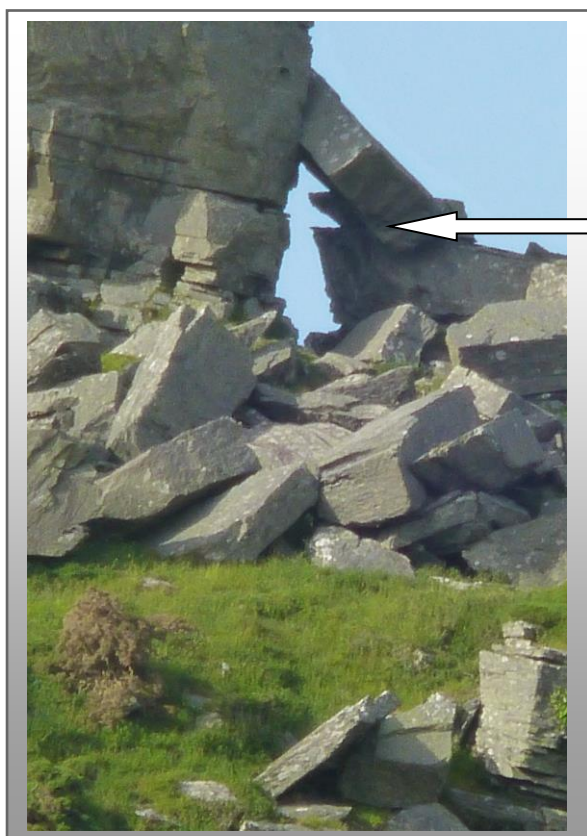
The Lynway is a delightful path that connects our hotel to Lynton and affords great views down to Lynmouth



Our required stop in The Valley of The Rocks. Great home-made cakes, soup etc and even a witch hanging from the tree with the Union Jack flags



We have been along this route so often but in each season it is always different and never fails to delight us. If you can't enjoy this beauty life must be pretty sad for you.



The 'White Lady' is easily visible in this shot.



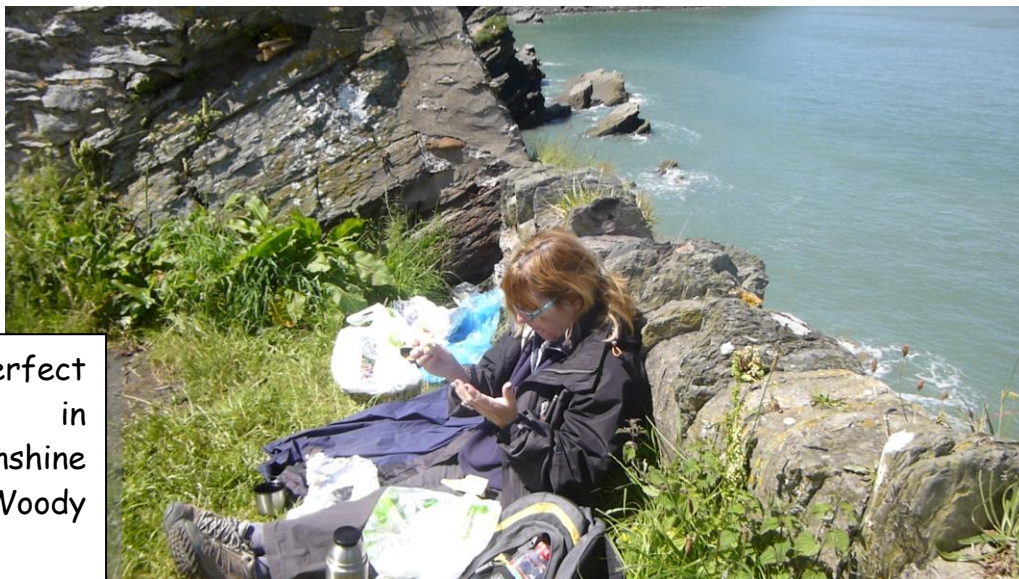


The cliff walk towards Woody Bay is really beautiful and is never crowded..

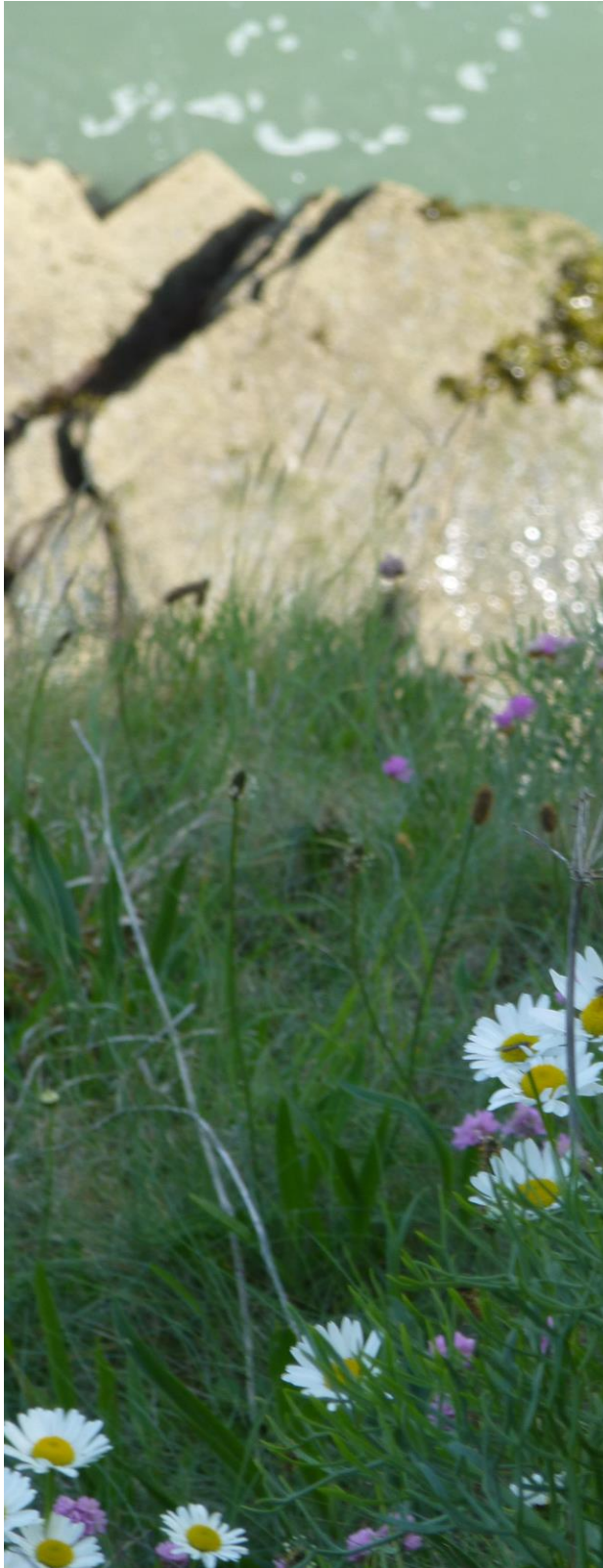




All that is left of a speculative venture that failed prior to The National Trust taking over stewardship of this glorious coastline.



This was a perfect picnic spot in brilliant sunshine high above Woody Bay





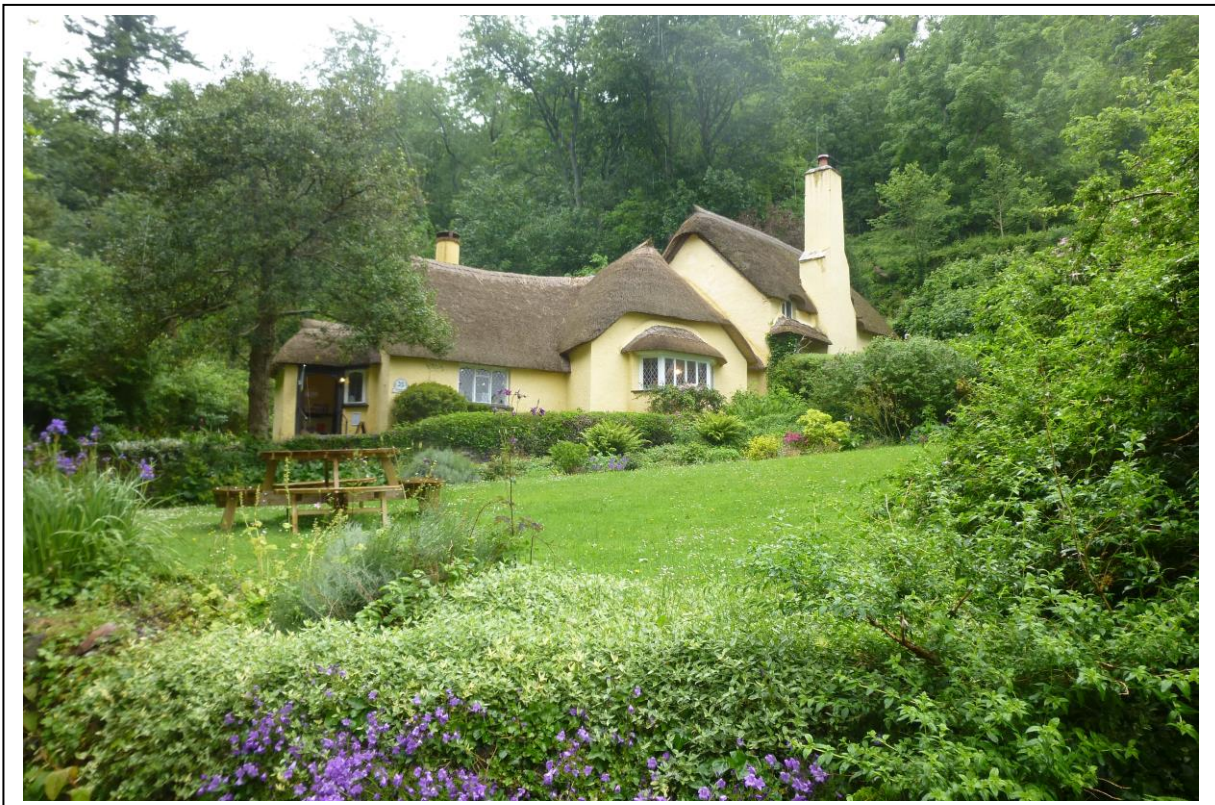
As we descended into Lynmouth on the return we heard the music from the festival echoing around the valley..



Fish and chips on the beach completed a memorable day...bliss, pure bliss (simple pleasures !!!)



On the journey home we had afternoon tea in the picture-book village of Selworthy. Beautifully situated with delightful cottages that seemed to be frozen in time. Probably what Americans think England is like...before a rude awakening..or is that my cynical outlook showing through again ??





Meandering through country lanes we came across a small wood of unique moss-covered knarled trees





In June we were invited to celebrate Rene Bazin's 100th birthday (my landlord at the unit), in Falmouth. We went by train travelling through this beautiful scenery. We had managed to book into a farm in Flushing which was a ferry ride across the water from Falmouth harbour and proved to be a great choice. Hidden on a peninsular this 400 acre farm was totally away from the world and we walked through wonderful farm footpaths and along the cliffs to Mylor where we had a great meal one night. It is so pretty here with delightful houses on the water, many with their own moorings.





Giant rhubarb on the farm...imagine how much manure this would need...







On the farm..





£4.00 for the ferry across to the harbour...a real bargain and such a cheerful crew.





...couple of feisty local birds





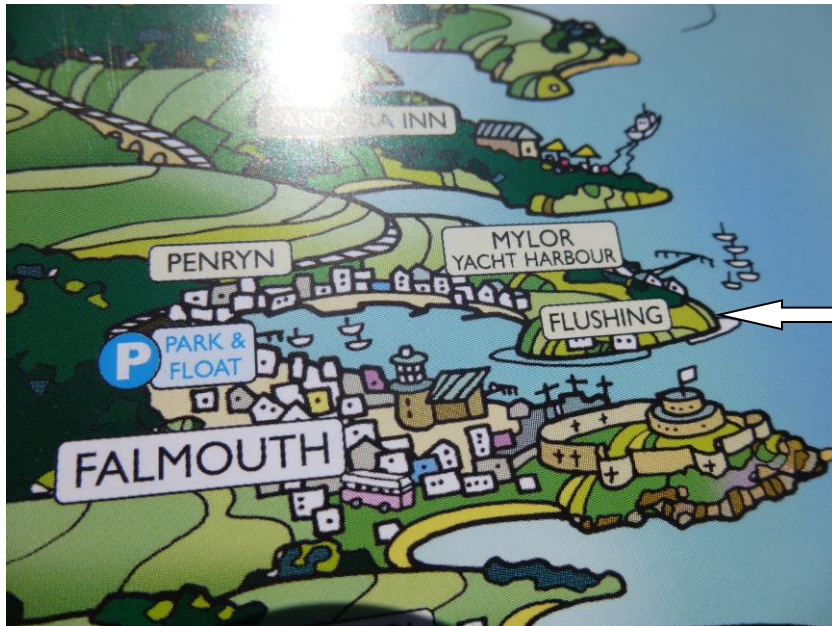
I am so pleased to know that you are celebrating your one hundredth birthday on 19th June, 2012. I send my congratulations and best wishes to you on such a special occasion.

Elizabeth II

Mr. René Bazin

Rene has had a fascinating life and it was a great privilege to share this celebration with him





this is where we stayed

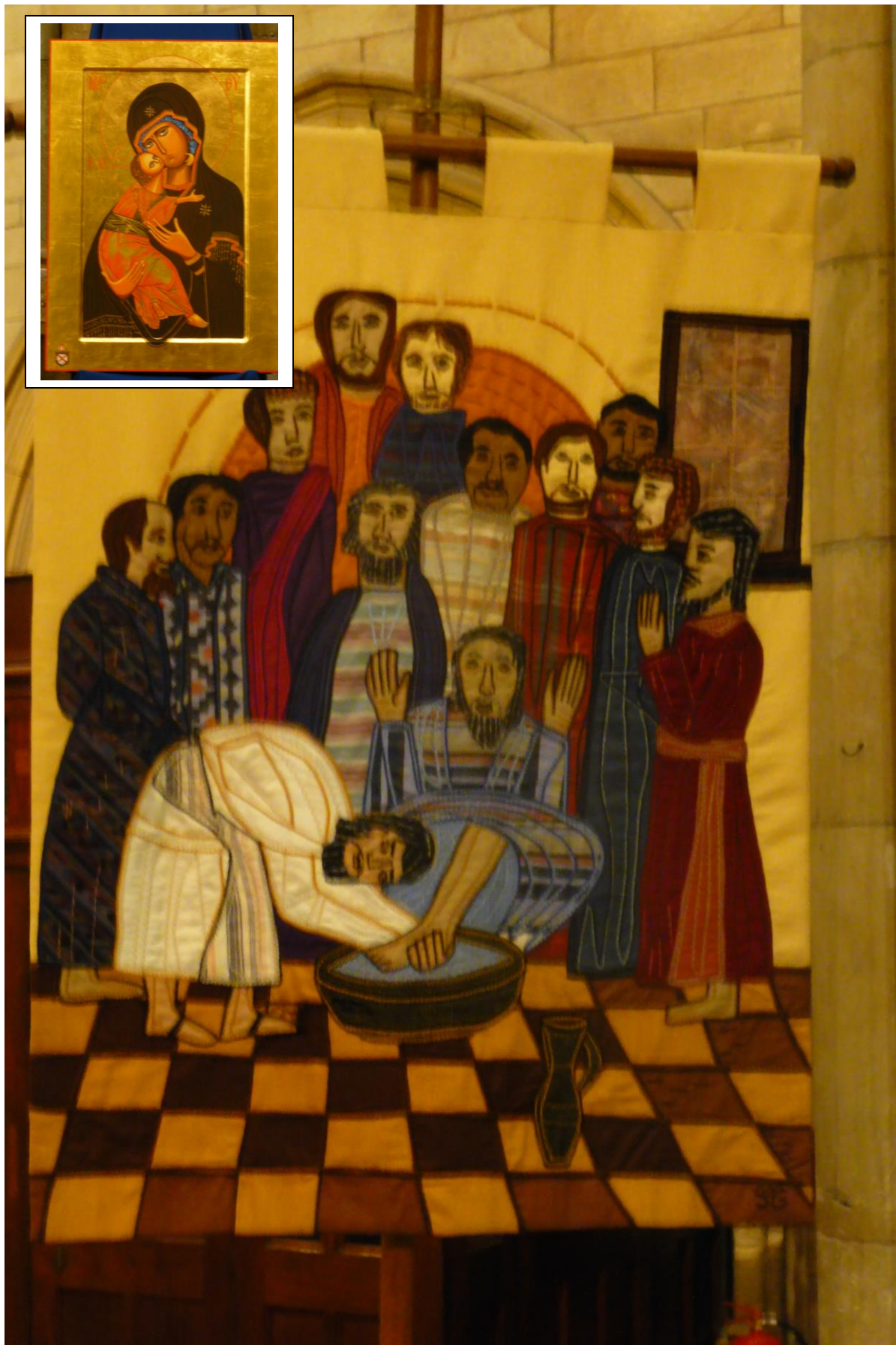
And this is the original flushing toilet
(The toilet in Flushing....)















Regents Park Sports Club - working out...





Mum's 92nd birthday - We went to Oslo court again and as always the food was great - enormous portions, predictable menu, same old staff and I think possibly the same clientele as previous times. A time warp but just right for the occasion...
This is a bloated rest opposite Oslo Court in Regents Park





With Robert and Sandra at Peter & Maryanne's tea at home



This picture sums up the great fun with Tammy and the dogs (Sam has gone exploring) This is in Trent Park just above their house and is a fantastic place for a long walk right on the doorstep..



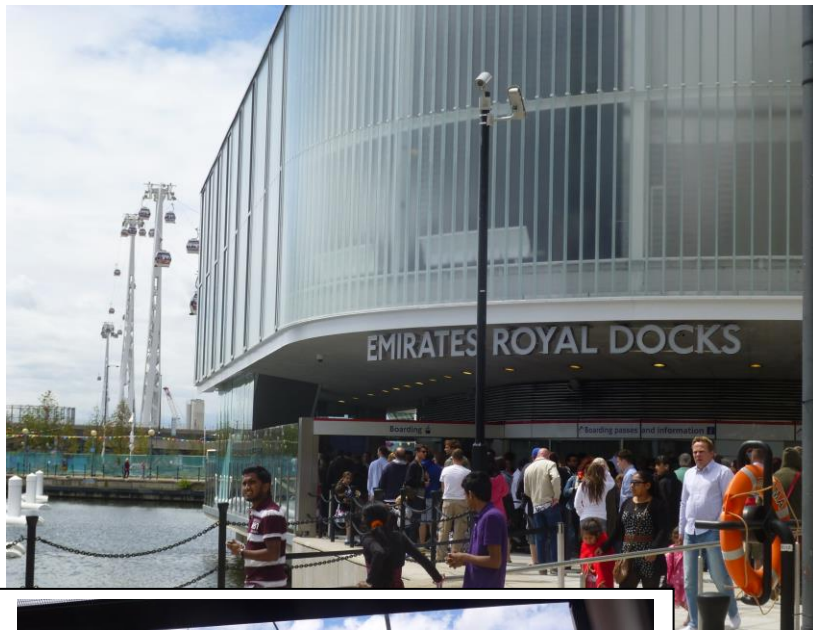


Poppy and Geoff came for lunch and are great company as always



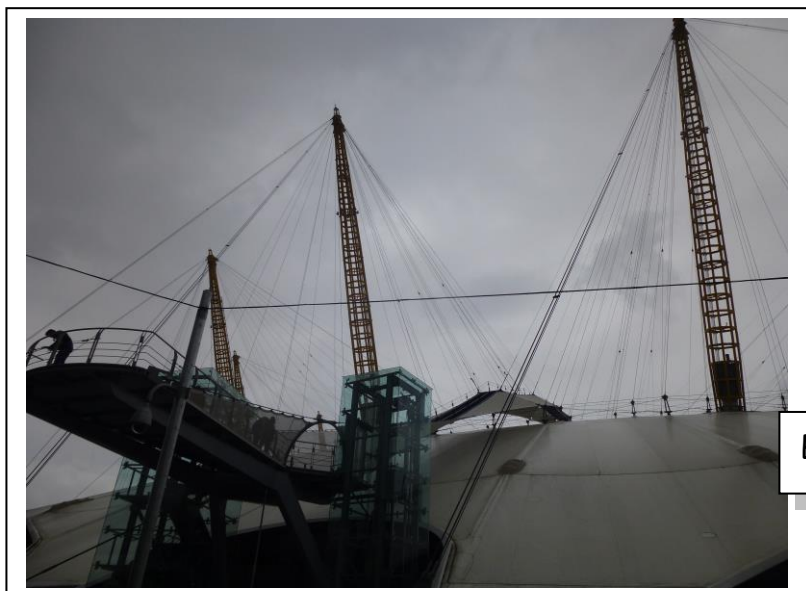


The Thames cable car has just opened and we were one of the first to venture across. It went higher than we expected and the first Lynn saw of the view was at home when she saw the video I had taken (the crossing was made with her eyes tightly closed....)

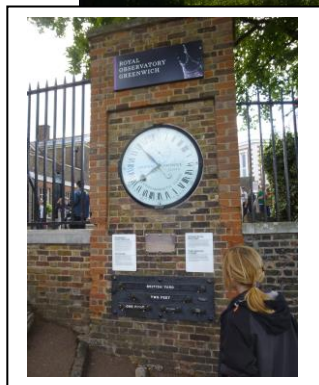




These shots are taken just prior to the Olympics and this is *The Greenwich Arena*. (It was known as the *Millenium Dome*...then it became the *O2 Centre*...probably will get another name post-Olympics).. They have just opened a 'roof walk' shown here but it was pelting down and very windy...(any excuse)



Buskers outside Greenwich Park



Greenwich Park below (seen from the observatory at the top of the hill) is almost completed as the Equestrian Centre for the Olympics but to our dismay the whole park was closed to non-ticket holders and the great free view that would have been afforded was not to be.

It is a great viewpoint





They didn't like the view of the Bermondsey bus so they blocked the windows



At long last The Shard is now officially open and I guess my Photo History again reflects the changing face of London. I also took some video clips so these are probably interesting to future generations...



maybe this
represents
the feeling
some of us
have



A lovely dappled clearing in Kenwood and yes.....the Shard from the same spot....





Wolfgang..the dynamic foursome walking in Forty Hall





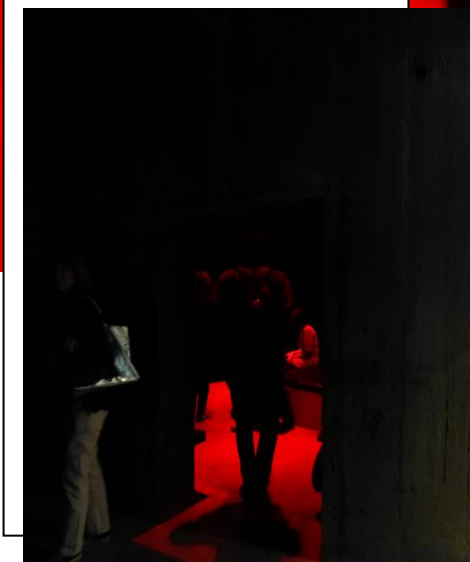
18 JULY –
28 OCTOBER 2012

THE TANKS
PROGRAMME NOTES

THE TANKS

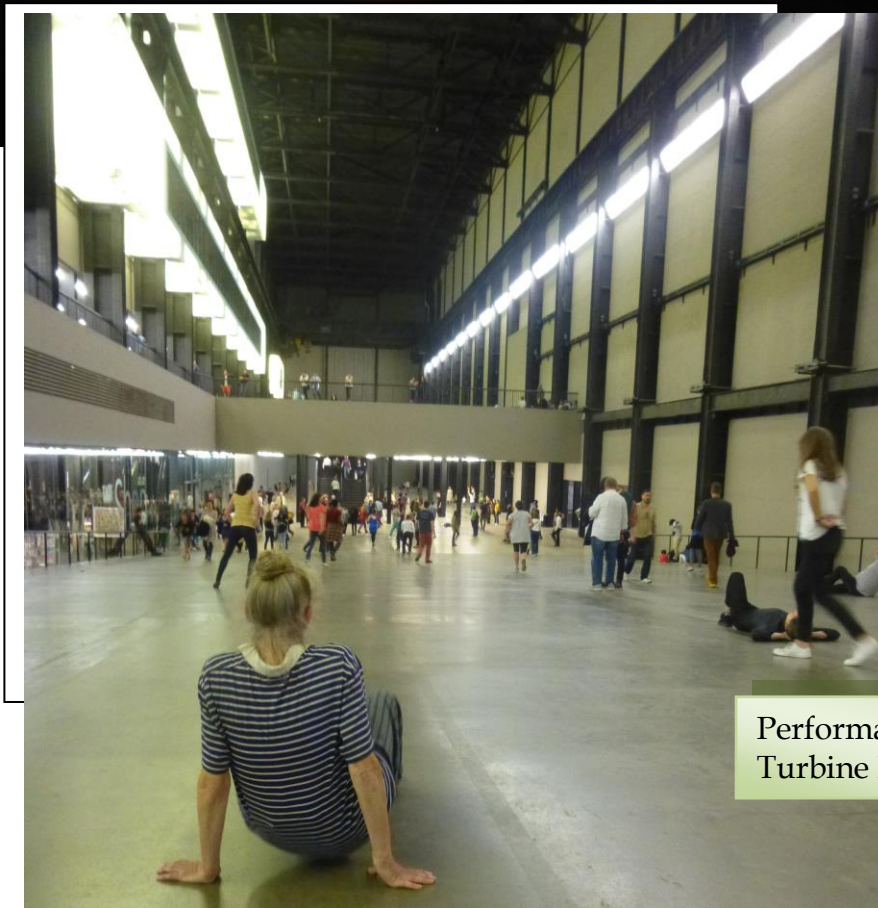
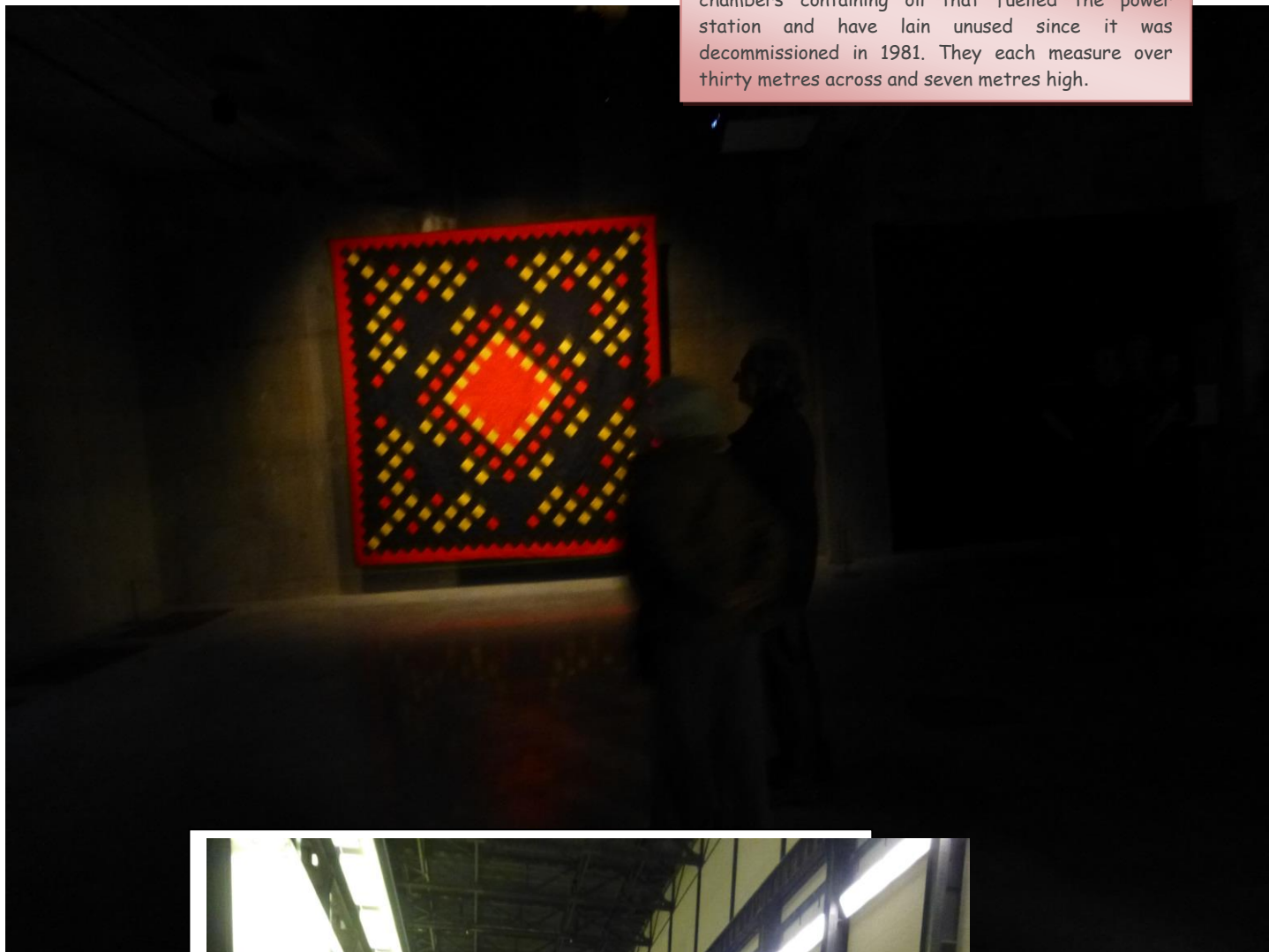
AT TATE MODERN
FIFTEEN WEEKS
OF ART IN ACTION

£3





The Tanks were originally massive industrial chambers containing oil that fuelled the power station and have lain unused since it was decommissioned in 1981. They each measure over thirty metres across and seven metres high.



Performance art in the Turbine Hall



Possibly not one's first choice of holiday location.



A train trip for the elderly to Brighton was a great day out for The Wolfgang and we had some short periods where we actually stopped laughing - but admittedly they were few and far between..





This house of ill repute featured the Shrivellies...a very raunchy if somewhat elderly group of strip tease artists from the last century. They were assisted to the stage discarding their zimmerframes and disrobing to reveal corsets and other unmentionable undergarments to the excited audience who were heard to cry "Get em on..get 'em on"Not a pretty sight



...only in Brighton